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The claims defining the invention are as follows:

1. A fabric for use in furniture, including outdoor furniture, the fabric formed, at least in part, from a synthetic material wherein the synthetic material is woven or knitted to provide a stretch characteristic of from 5% to 50%.
- 5 2. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the synthetic material is warp knitted.
3. The fabric of claim 2, wherein the synthetic material is warp knitted in an interlocking weave pattern adapted to provide the stretch characteristics.
4. The fabric of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein the synthetic material comprises one or more of nylon, polyester, polypropylene, polyethylene or a polyolefin material.
- 10 5. The fabric of claim 4, wherein the synthetic material is nylon.
6. The fabric of claim 2, wherein the fabric includes a component of cotton.
7. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the fabric has a first stretch characteristic in a first direction and a second greater stretch characteristic in a second direction which is substantially perpendicular to the first direction.
- 15 8. The fabric of claim 7, wherein the stretch characteristic in the first direction is 10% or less.
9. The fabric of claim 7 or claim 8, wherein the stretch characteristic in the second direction is from 10% to 50%.
10. The fabric of claim 1 or claim 7, further comprising a plurality of
20 ventilation holes.
11. The fabric of claim 10, wherein the ventilation holes are distributed in a regular pattern.
12. The fabric of claim 10, wherein the ventilation holes are present in a sufficient number to provide a ratio of material holes from 70%/30% to 80%/20%.
- 25 13. The fabric of claim 10, wherein the ventilation holes vary in diameter from 2mm to 50mm.
14. The fabric of claim 13, wherein the ventilation holes are around 5mm in diameter.
15. The fabric of claim 10, wherein the ventilation holes are slit-like,
30 rectangular or ellipsoidal.
16. A hammock or hammock chair including fabric of any one of claim 1 to

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claim 15.

17. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 16, wherein the fabric is arranged to have its first direction with a lesser stretch characteristic aligned, in use, approximately along the head to tail axis of a user and its second direction with a greater stretch
5 characteristic aligned transverse to the head to tail axis of a user.

18. The hammock of claim 16, wherein the fabric has its first direction of a lesser stretch characteristic aligned along the length of the hammock and its second direction of a greater stretch characteristic aligned across the width of the hammock.

19. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 16, further comprising printed
10 visible indicia, the indicia including text and/or graphic elements.

20. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 19, wherein the indicia are adapted to identify ownership of the hammock or hammock chair or to advertise products and/or services.

21. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 19, wherein the indicia are
15 personalised for an owner.

22. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 16, further comprising a spreading rod formed as a flexible elongate member adapted to deform under load in a hammock or hammock chair while substantially assuming its undeformed configuration when not under load.

20 23. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 22, wherein the spreading rod has a plurality of apertures dimensioned to receive supporting cords.

24. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 23, wherein the spreading rod is located in a sleeve in the hammock or hammock chair.

25. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 22, wherein the spreading rod is
25 formed integrally with or supported directly by a frame support of the hammock or hammock chair.

26. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 22, wherein the flexible elongate member is formed from one or more of plastic, rubber, spring steel, wood or polyvinyl chloride tubing.

30 27. The hammock or hammock chair of claim 22, wherein the spreading rod is formed from polyvinyl chloride plastic tube with a diameter of from 10mm to 30mm.

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28. A spreading rod for a hammock or hammock chair formed as a flexible elongate member adapted to deform under load and to assume its undeformed configuration when not under load.

29. The spreading rod of claim 28 comprising a plurality of spaced apertures dimensioned to received supporting cords.

30. The spreading rod of claim 28 formed from one or more of plastic, rubber, spring steel, wood and polyvinyl chloride plastic tubing.

31. The spreading rod of claim 30, wherein the spreading rod is formed from polyvinyl chloride plastic tubing with a diameter of from 10mm to 30mm.

32. A method of forming a hammock, the method comprising the steps of:
warp knitting a fabric from a synthetic material and having a lesser stretch characteristic in a first direction and a greater stretch characteristic in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction;

aligning the first direction along a length of the hammock and the second direction across the width of the hammock;

forming a supporting body of the hammock with the fabric.

33. The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of forming the fabric with a first stretch characteristic of 10% or less and a second stretch characteristic between 10% and 50%.

34. The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of forming a plurality of ventilation apertures in the fabric.

35. The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of fixing a flexible spreading rod at each end of the hammock.

36. The method of claim 35, further comprising the step of fixing a plurality of supporting cords to each of the flexible spreading rods.

37. The method of claim 32, further comprising the step of printing visible indicia on the surface of the fabric.

38. A method of promoting a product or event, said method comprising the step of printing relevant material on a hammock or hammock chair of claim 16.

39. A method of displaying an interest or affiliation, the method comprising the step of printing relevant indicia on a hammock or hammock chair of claim 16.

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40. A method of identifying ownership of a hammock, the method comprising the step of printing identifying indicia on a hammock or hammock chair of claim 16.